

Department of Veterans Affairs

§ 70.30

order to receive payment in accordance with § 70.30(a)(3) for the meals and/or lodging.

(e) If VA determines that additional information is needed to make a determination concerning an application under this part, VA will notify the claimant in writing of the deficiency and request additional information. If the claimant has not responded to the request within 30 days, VA may decide the claim prior to the expiration of the 1-year submission period required by 38 U.S.C. 5103(b)(1) based on all the information contained in the file, including any information it has obtained on behalf of the claimant. If VA does so, however, and the claimant subsequently provides the information within 1 year of the date of the request, VA must readjudicate the claim.

(f) Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, if a person becomes eligible for payment of beneficiary travel after the travel takes place, payment may be made if the person applies for travel benefits within 30 days of the date when the person became eligible for travel benefits.

(g) The date of an application for beneficiary travel is the postmark date, if mailed; or the date of submission if hand delivered, provided by electronic means, or provided orally.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101, 111, 501, 1701, 1714, 1720, 1728, 1782, 1783, E.O. 11302)

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection provisions in this section under control number 2900-0080)

§ 70.21 Where to apply.

Claimants for beneficiary travel must submit the information required in § 70.20 to the Chief of the Business Office or other designee at the VA medical facility responsible for the medical care or services being provided and for which travel is required.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101, 111, 501, 1701, 1714, 1720, 1728, 1782, 1783, E.O. 11302)

§ 70.30 Payment principles.

(a) Subject to the other provisions of this section and subject to the deductibles required under § 70.31, VA will pay the following for beneficiary

travel by an eligible beneficiary when travel expenses are actually incurred:

(1) The per mile rate established by the Secretary for the period of travel for use of privately owned vehicle or the actual cost for use of the most economical common carrier (bus, train, taxi, airplane, etc.), for travel to and from VA or VA-authorized health care subject to the following:

(i) Travel by a privately owned vehicle for a compensation and pension examination that is solely for the convenience of the Government (e.g., repeat a laboratory test, redo a poor quality x-ray) may have a different per mile rate if deemed appropriate by the Secretary.

(ii) Per mile payment for use of privately owned vehicle may not exceed the cost of such travel by public transportation (even if it is for the convenience of the government) unless determined to be medically necessary.

(iii) Payment for a common carrier may not exceed the amount allowed for a privately owned vehicle unless travel by a privately owned vehicle is not reasonably accessible or travel by a common carrier is determined to be medically necessary.

(iv) As required by law, each time the Federal government makes a change in mileage rates payable under 5 U.S.C. 5702 and 5704 for Federal employee travel by privately owned vehicle, but not less frequently than annually, the Secretary shall conduct an investigation of the actual costs of travel, including lodging and subsistence. In conducting the investigation, the Secretary shall consult with the Administrator of the General Services Administration, the Secretary of Transportation, the Comptroller General of the United States, and veterans' service organizations. As part of the investigation, the Secretary shall review and consider various factors including vehicle depreciation, State and Federal vehicle taxes and the costs of gasoline, oil, maintenance, accessories, parts, tires, and insurance. However, to the extent that the Administrator of General Services has, within a reasonable period of time, conducted an investigation of travel costs that included the factors described in this paragraph, the